

Home and abroad

UNIT 4

Taking a year out after school

Jay: 'When I left school, I got a job as a language teacher in Nepal. They sent me to a remote village where I taught in a government school. For the first month I felt really homesick. I missed my family and couldn't phone them because there weren't any phones. The culture shock was incredible – I travelled in a bus with goats and chickens! Of life and take part in activities. When I first arrived, I met head and his father got angry. I didn't understand until a colleague explained that for Buddhists and Hindus, the head is the most sacred part of the body. It's important to respect local customs.'

So, why not experience something different? Opportunities can be found abroad or right on your own doorstep!

Ever thought of doing something different after finishing school? We meet two young people who did just that.

Karim: 'I spent six months working for the council. I visited people who lived on housing estates, helping them with cleaning, cooking and shopping. Meeting people was a real insight into different lives – I helped families on low incomes and disabled people. I realize how lucky I am to have good health and I appreciate my family more. I faced a few problems, like overcoming language barriers with some immigrants whose mother tongue was Polish, or gaining the trust of elderly people who were suspicious of a young man at their door. I feel I gained a lot from the experience and I want to get involved with my local community after I finish my studies.'

READING

1 Read the text quickly and find:

- three household jobs *cleaning*
- a foreign language *Polish*
- two kinds of animals *goats*
- people of two religions *Buddhists*

2 Read the text and write True or False for sentences 1–8.

- Karim didn't learn much from visiting people. *False*
- He says he had a real insight into different lives and gained a lot from the experience. *True*
- Helping immigrants presented Karim with difficulties. *True*
- He faced a few problems, like overcoming language barriers with some immigrants. *True*

- Older people were always very happy when they first met Karim. *False*
- He had to gain 'the trust of elderly people who were suspicious of a young man at their door'. *True*
- Karim would enjoy similar work in the future. *True*
- He wants to get involved with my local community after I finish my studies. *True*
- Jay contacted her family frequently during the first month. *False*
- She couldn't phone them because there weren't any phones. *True*
- Jay participated in the local way of life. *True*
- She began to get used to the way of life and take part in activities. *True*
- Jay was surprised by a parent's reaction. *True*
- She didn't understand why the boy's teacher was angry until a colleague explained. *True*

4 Find words or expressions in the text which match the definitions.

- local government *council*
- poor urban areas *housing estates*
- understanding of *insight into*
- with little money *on low incomes*
- confidence *trust*
- sad because you're not with family *homesick*
- feeling of disorientation *culture shock*
- person who works with you *colleague*
- holy *sacred*

The Ambitious Generation: America's Teenagers

A This study of American teenagers by Barbara Schneider and David Stevenson claims that today's teenagers are more ambitious and motivated than before in what they want to do, but a high percentage are directionless because they have inadequate plans to achieve their goals.

B The comparison between 1990s and 1950s teenagers is interesting. 1990s teens are more likely to aspire to careers as professionals, managers, and entrepreneurs than 1950s teens, who had less ambitious goals, such as factory work or being wives and mothers without outside employment. Because of this, 1990s teens aspired to a higher level of education than their grandparents, usually a university degree.

C The authors recognise great changes in American society in the last 50 years. A high school student in 1959 could expect to find a stable job to support a family and buy a house, with no further education. This is not the case now. The authors feel that the problem is not society itself, but that students are preparing inadequately. They believe that the majority of high school students are planning to obtain too much or too little education for their vocation, or not planning at all.

D The authors also mention the role of work in teenagers' lives. They say that the majority of high school students have part-time jobs, but they only analyse whether work helps or hinders teenagers' vocational ambitions. They don't consider whether it affects their studies, social life, or family, or recognise that most kids work to acquire spending money. This is the book's biggest problem. The authors view teenagers only in terms of work; if a teenager wishes to travel or fall in love or feed the homeless or save the whales, that is not considered a valid ambition. The ambitions that the authors describe are important to adults but perhaps not to teenagers themselves.

1 Read the text and choose the correct answers. (4 marks)

- Compared to teens in the 1950s, 1990s teens...
 A have more ambitious goals.
 B want to stay at home with children
 C are less interested in education.
 D society is responsible.
- The authors believe that life is different now because...
 A students don't prepare well enough.
 B students study too much.
 C The authors consider the effect of work on teenagers'...
 D a social life.
- The writer of this book review thinks that travelling or falling in love are...
 A valid ambitions.
 B not valid ambitions.
 C important for adults.

3 Complete the sentences with the correct prepositions. (2 marks)

- Without a clear objective (paragraph A) *directionless*
- want to have (paragraph B) *aspirin to*
- not sufficiently or not correctly (paragraph C) *inadequately*
- makes difficult (paragraph D) *hinders*

2 Match words 1–8 with words from the text. (4 marks)

- A comparison is made *between* two groups of teenagers.
- There have been a lot of changes *in/over* the last 50 years.
- The majority *of* students do not make plans.
- There is a problem *with* this book.

Total /10 marks